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GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE

This past year has been so difficult for all of us – in our lives – but particularly in our churches, where we have had to create different ways of sharing God's word.

Myself – I began with the leg infection at the beginning of May 2020. It has been a 'yo-yo' time, but thanks to praying brothers and sisters in the Lord and God's faithful love and timing, it is almost healed.

All the way through, God has been so faithful and enabled me to carry out the tasks of service He has given me to do for Him, working among our church family.

At the very start of it all, God gave me the words of the song:

Faithful One, so unchanging,
Ageless One, You're my rock of peace.
Lord of all, I depend on You.
I call out to You, again and again.

You are my rock in times of trouble,
You lift me up when I fall down,
All through the storm Your love is the anchor,
My hope is in You alone.

What precious, comforting words these are for us all!

God also gave me a chapter from Lamentations chapter 3 and I give it to you now.

He particularly brought out verses 23– 24: 'Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness'. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion, therefore I will wait for Him.'

Here, in Jeremiah's darkest time, his hope was strengthened with this assurance. **God had been faithful and would continue to be faithful.** Jeremiah saw God's judgement, but he also knew God's steadfast love. In this time of judgement, Jeremiah could still cling to God's love, just as he had in time of prosperity.

Jeremiah truly knew, from personal experience, what God's faithfulness meant. God had promised that punishment would follow disobedience, and it did. But God also promised future restoration and great blessings and Jeremiah knew that God, as always, would keep that promise.

What great words of challenge and hope for us in these times. **Trusting in God's faithfulness, day by day, makes us confident in His great promises for the future, whatever this may hold.**

Selwyn Hughes tells of going to see a woman who had lost her husband in an accident. As he comforted her, he spoke of God's unfailing love and presence. Her answer to it all was 'I don't need to understand all that. What I do need is a God who is bigger than my understanding, a God who knows so much more than me.'

A mild rebuke, but a great lesson for us all.

There is so much solace in simply recognizing that God is bigger than we are, and that through His great and faithful love, and His unfailing presence, we can trust Him to work out everything for the very best in our lives.

We need to hold on to our faithful God, for in His mercy and love, He will bring us through.

Jean Waterfield, Bowbroom Church





WHERE ARE THEY NOW

David Cartledge

Where do you live now?

We live in "Hilton of Cadboll" Hilton. Hilton is one of three small adjacent old fishing villages known collectively as "The Seaboard (Villages)" on the Moray Firth. We are in a little bay so have a weather system of our own. We do not get snow storms every year which made 2019 remarkable for we had snow in March which blocked us in for a day or so. Great excitement.

Are you still involved in the Union?

No

If not, for how many years were you involved in the Union?

I began to attend Muff Field Sunday School in Bradford around 1948/49. I continued in Sunday School to Youth Fellowship to church membership etc. I was Scout Master for a number of years before going to Cliff College in the early 1960's. I was involved in WRU therefore for about 34 years. After my time as youth secretary, I ministered in the Ashby Circuit and after 5 years at LBC (1973-78) I ministered at Sharrovale WRU.

Where do you currently worship?

We are members of the Balintore UF Church.

Balintore UF Church is conservative evangelical with an excellent expository preaching minister. The fellowship is warm and caring and a great support to us in every way in our old age. We would not be elsewhere.

Which of the following do you prefer and why?

Organ, piano or music group?

When we came to live here the local church resembled the Free Church and sang only precentor-led Psalms and Paraphrases in church services but sang Mission Praise at the weekly prayer meeting in the church hall. Now, 16 years on we sing a keyboard-led whole variety of hymns and songs from a mass of hymn books. We still sing unaccompanied psalms but each service has its own printed service sheet with the words of the hymns on; the words are also projected on the wall of the church as is the Bible reading and weekly notices. So long as the music helps the worshipper to worship the source does not matter.

Pews or chairs?

In 2012 the narrow uncomfortable pews were removed and replaced with comfortable upholstered chairs. We have since had a new kitchen installed and before Covid, had regular church meals together.

Lectern or pulpit?

Either as appropriate.

Refreshments before, during or after the service?

Either before or after.

Other than the Bible, which

book has influenced you the most?

Books have always played a large part in my life and I have around 3,500 shelved around the house and attic. Jim Packer, John Stott, Donald Guthrie, Don Carson, Wayne Grudem, Alastair McGrath to name but a few. I am still buying them!

Who would you most like to have supper with (dead or alive, actual or fictional)?

I love having supper and am happy to eat with anyone available - maybe Paul and John the evangelist, or Luther, Calvin, Knox, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Billy Graham, etc etc etc.

What is your favourite Bible verse?

I cannot pick one verse from the treasury I have been reading for the past 66+ years.

What is your favourite hymn or song?

My favourite hymn is "Just as I am" partly because it was being sung the night I gave my heart to the Lord (at a relay in Bradford from Kelvin Hall, Glasgow) but also because I can only ever come to God other than as I am.

What is your favourite memory of your time in the Union?

Working with Jean Handley and Mr and Mrs Halliday in Church House, Sheffield, but supremely Swanwick Youth Conferences and holidays. What a thrill to see 300 young folk with Bibles and notebooks listening to Ray Beeley speaking about Christian growth in a talk entitled "Welcome little stranger".

Nehemiah 2:4

'So I prayed to the God of heaven.'

Recommended Reading: Matthew 65-13

In the last issue we began to look at the life of Nehemiah. **We saw how he was very much aware of God's providential care over his life.**

This time I want to consider **his prayer life**, which should be a vital part of every believer's life.

There is no doubt that Nehemiah was a man of prayer. He was in constant communion with his God.

In chapter 1:2 we are told that Hanani and other men from Judah came to Susa, and Nehemiah asked them about the situation in Jerusalem.

The news was disturbing (v3). We find Nehemiah's response in v 4. **What is our response to the distressing news we hearing each day in the media?**

Nehemiah's response was to pray. He loved the city of Jerusalem; it was the joy of the whole earth. Yet, 140 years earlier the Babylonians had destroyed the city and it lay in ruins. He desperately wanted to return, **but two major obstacles lay before him.**

First, he is 800 miles from Jerusalem as the crow flies, and unfortunately there wasn't a crow in Persia big enough to carry him. **It would take four months to complete the 1,400 mile journey, and it would be dangerous.**

Secondly, he couldn't just quit his employment. It was difficult enough getting into the Persian palace, but it was more difficult getting out.

So, does he despair? Does he panic? Does he give up as many would do today? No, he prays!

Notice his prayer which begins in v 5. It begins with **worship**, then **confession**, then **thanks**, and finally, in the last verse, **he makes his appeal to God.**

In our prayers today we tend to rush to our requests. It can be like going through a supermarket check list, ticking off each item as we complete it.

Have we forgotten how to worship God in our prayers? Nehemiah sets a pattern we would do well to follow. He finally prays for an opportunity to speak to the king.

We are told in v 1 that he prays in the month Chislew (October/November). His answer is in chapter 2:1, the month Nisan (March/April). **God didn't answer his prayers for four months. He had to learn patience.**

Today we live in an instant society. Everything has to be done immediately. It is internet shopping; fast food chains; instant meals followed by instant coffee; correspondence by emails. Snail mail is becoming history.

Well, I have news for you. God doesn't work like that! It has to be in His way and in His time. I can assure you, it is always the best. You cannot rush God, neither can you delay Him.

Lay your requests before Him. He hears our prayers. Then let Him answer in His good time. It is always worth the wait.

With kind permission of Day One Publications who in the Summer of 2021 hope to publish a book of 365 daily readings entitled 'Thoughts for the Day' by John Roberts

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



CONFERENCE

MONDAY, 2ND AUGUST

Opening devotions were led by the retiring President, Rev Colin Braithwaite.

Mr George Phillips was proposed as President for the next two years by Mrs Sandra Fall. Nominations for General Committee were approved by Conference.

Reports were received from:

- The Ministerial Committee
- The Christian Ethics & Social Action Committee
- The Women of Action Committee
- The Union Safeguarding Officer

All the above reports contained causes for concern and reasons to rejoice as well as items of encouragement.

The statistical report was received, but accepted for guidance only as the last year had been difficult and unusual because of the government ban on church gatherings.

In the evening, George Phillips was Inducted as Union President for the next two years. In his Presidential address he challenged us (using Esther as an

example) to consider the question "Why am I here". It was good that his family were able to join us for the evening.

TUESDAY, 3RD AUGUST

Opening devotions were led by the President, Mr George Phillips.

The Resolution of Loyalty was read, and Conference rose to sing the National Anthem.

The members of General Committee were approved. Cliff Darby (who was not standing this year) was thanked for all his years of service and the two new members, Lisa McBeth (Heath End) and Adam Shepherd (Griffydam) were welcomed to the Committee.

We were joined (via Zoom) by our Union solicitor and had a full discussion on the need for the Union to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This was necessary for us to function as we should in the 21st century. A full briefing document will be sent to churches for discussion before a decision as to whether to proceed will be taken at Conference 2022.

Conference received the Treasurers report and were



2021

informed that we were in a reasonably healthy condition financially and that there will be no increase in assessment for the coming year.

During the Overseas Missions report, the new project for the coming year was introduced as "Love Russia" and the secretary will inform all churches of the details in due course.



In the afternoon, our Conference Speaker, Chris Hand from Crich Baptist Church spoke about The Beauty of God.

The time after our evening meal was spent in Group discussion about the future of the Union followed by a plenary session to share thoughts on the above. A new role for the Union was introduced – a National Spiritual Co-ordinator – and a job description agreed. This will be circulated to churches and applications invited by the end of August. It is anticipated that the



new role will begin at Conference 2022.

WEDNESDAY, 4TH AUGUST

Opening devotions were led by Muriel Stonehewer, representing the Women of Action.

The Union Committees were approved, and the following reports were presented:

- Home Mission Committee
- Young People's department
- Ministers' Provident Society
- Local Preachers Department

All were enthusiastically received.

The question of whether we should consider a female President in future years had been discussed in churches during the year and was put to a vote at this point in Conference. There were a majority of votes in favour of considering a female President.

After lunch, David Bracken was Ordained into the Ministry of the Union and then Conference concluded by sharing in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

A fitting end to an excellent Conference.



OVERSEAS MISSIONS

Jesus Christ CHANGES EVERYTHING!

Lesley Notghi, one of the doctors at the Good News Hospital writes...

A sick woman was brought in by her mother from a distant village. She weighed less than 30kg and looked at once younger and older than her 35 years. The story was vague and the patient perhaps confused – stomach pains for a long time, maybe a year - but she was so weak that she could not sit up and all her bones showed. The only non-cancer diagnosis to explain such emaciation seemed to be extra-pulmonary tuberculosis, and that would be extremely difficult to prove- the patient was likely to vanish first. We treated for anaemia and parasites and urinary infection, and the patient was as gaunt and listless and miserable as before.

In fact she had tropical diabetes, a form of insulin-dependent diabetes that may follow chronic malnutrition in childhood causing pancreatic damage. A few days after starting treatment, she was back on her feet and beginning to take an interest in life. It took much longer, and many painstaking sessions with the medical ward staff to teach mother and daughter how to draw up and inject insulin,



how to store it and what dangers to look out for. They had been hoping that their local paramedic could just take over this treatment. In fact they had to be ready to manage entirely on their own – their village was more than a day's walk distance and they would not be back to outpatients for a long time. They were prepared to stay near the hospital though and visit night and morning until their training was completed, and they did it. At the same time, night and morning, the good news of Jesus was shared with them for three weeks, and perhaps more than one life rescued.

Please pray for this family and the many others like them, that they might find new life in Jesus. Do pray for Lesley and the rest of the team for wisdom to make the right diagnosis and for the right words of hope to share with patients.



HOW SOON IS SOON?

The White Rabbit is a fictional character in

"Alice's Adventure in Wonderland", running down a rabbit hole, looking at his pocket watch and muttering "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!"

Well. I have had the female equivalent staying with me for a week in the summer, (without the floppy ears and pocket watch, I hasten to add) and it did little for my blood pressure!

You see, when it comes to timing, I am not the laid back retired lady. Oh no. I am fanatical about being anywhere and everywhere on time, or even two minutes early. My work life (I can just remember it), required me to keep to timetables and I still maintain the same discipline. So when my guest arrived late for every

meal, or I received a text saying, "Back soon", I tried to smile and breathed very deeply and wondered "How soon is soon?"

In Revelation 1:1, John refers to things which must *shortly* take place and then in verse 3, "the time is near", and as we know,

here the scripture refers to the coming again of our Lord Jesus in glory. The great question is "When will Jesus return? "How soon is soon?"

It is such a wonderful, glorious and long anticipated event and we should be living in the expectation of His return at any time and being as prepared as possible. Peter describes such readiness as being "In holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God". I just wonder if "soon" will be sooner than we think!

Daphne Hodkinson

PRESIDENTIAL VISITS

October

24th Ashington Area

DOC DATES

September

12th - Bierley - Induction of Pastor Andy Wade

19th - Curba, Bakewell Circuit

26th - Addingham Family Day

October

3rd - Philadelphia Harvest Celebration

10th - Denby Dale

WHAT'S ON?

Bethel Community Church Holiday Club



Bethel Community Church, in Bierley held a Holiday Club in August. An enthusiastic team, supported by Andy Wilcock from Home Missions worked very well together.

The three days were based on the theme of "Live, Move and Be!"

Acts 17:28 'For in him we live and move and have our being.'

We made contact with a number of new families, and the kids enjoyed the crafts, games and storytelling. We explored together the Story of Creation, a number of Jesus miracles and then the Parable of the Lost Son.

If you would like to explore running your own Holiday Club or any other type of outreach, please do get in touch with Andy Wilcock email: andymarkw@gmail.com



Local Preachers

A few weeks ago Tom, our plan secretary here at TLC Bozeat, was looking through some really old preaching plans and discovered that 2 of our preachers have been faithfully preaching God's Word in our fellowship for 40 years!

We felt this could not go without celebrating it in some way. So we invited Mr Richard Keech to come to preach and presented him and his wife Elsie with a bouquet of flowers and a voucher for afternoon tea at a local stately home.



Mr and Mrs Richard Keech

A few weeks later Mr Jon Thompson came to preach and we also presented him and his wife Diane with a planter and an afternoon tea voucher.

Richard is a local preacher in the Wellingborough Circuit and worships regularly at Rushden High Street Church (The Wes).

Jon is a local preacher in the Nene Valley Methodist Circuit (formerly called the Wellingborough Circuit) and is a member at Earls Barton Methodist Church.

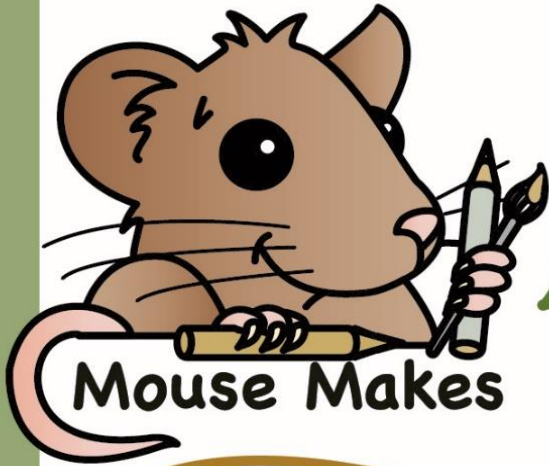


Mr and Mrs Jonathan Thompson

Congratulations Mary & Benny

Congratulations to Mr & Mrs Seeds (Mary and Benny) on the occasion of their wedding Saturday 21st August. We are so thankful for the fantastic day we were able to share with family and friends. We pray that God will richly bless their new life together in Leeds. From very proud parents Anne-Marie and Andy Wilcock, pastor at Hampden view WR Church.





Jesus said:
 "The kingdom of heaven
 is like a _____ **seed**
 that a man took and sowed in
 his **field**. It is the _____
 of all the seeds, but when it
 has grown it becomes a tree,
 so that the wild _____ come
 and nest in its branches."

Read
 Matthew
 13:31-32

"GOD is the **one**
 who gives seed to those
 who **plant**, and He gives
bread for **food**. And GOD
 will give you spiritual seed
 and make that seed grow.
 He will **produce** a great
harvest from your goodness."
 2 Corinthians 9:10

Jesus said:
 "You do not need more **faith**. There
 is no 'more' or 'less'
 in faith. If you have
 a bare kernel of faith,
 say the size of a poppy
 seed, you could
 say to this
 sycamore
 tree
 "Go
 jump
 into
 the
 lake"
 and it
 would do it."
 Luke 17:6

So the one who
 plants is not important,
 and the one who **waters** is not
 important. Only **GOD** is
 important because He is the
 one who makes things grow."
 1 Corinthians 3:7

Look out for seeds
 in the
 park
 and
 garden
 and in your kitchen
 store cupboard.

How many
 different seeds
 can you
 find?

H A R V E S T W O E S
 F I A F T P L A N T B
 O F A I T H A T E E R
 O O J E S U S E E D E
 D E U L O U G R O W A
 P R O D U C E S G O D

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